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conceal, under a counterfeit virtue, their real impotency. My object, therefore, in provoking their modesty by this sharp retort, is to let the plainest people understand that, if my enemies hold their peace, their forbearance must be ascribed, not to the meekness of their natures, but to the power of a guilty conscience. Thus, has this honest friar discovered the secret of shutting your mouths; and it must be employed, on all occasions, when you accuse people without proof. We have only to reply to each slander as it appears in the words of the Capuchin, *mentiris impudentissime*—you are most impudent liars."

Without, however, resorting to the expedient of the good Capuchin friar, there are some practical tests, we think, by which intelligent readers, however distrustful of those with whom they have been taught to differ in matters of religion, will find no difficulty in satisfying themselves, whether our pages are trustworthy, or whether we are guilty of the charges of deliberate falsehood and calumny, with which those whom they have been accustomed to consider their spiritual guides have so unsparingly and unjustly assailed us.

First, we would call the attention of our readers to the fact, that we have never yet, though two years and a half in active and most extensive circulation, been once detected in a false statement, a garbled quotation, or any other intentional unfairness, either in argument or assertion. Our readers, who have traced our progress, cannot fail to have perceived that we have been, all through, most carefully watched by men, most able and willing to expose the slightest inaccuracy, or semblance of unfairness of any species whatsoever; and who would willingly displace us from the high ground on which we have taken our stand, as champions of fair play, and candid inquiry, and expose and disgrace us for insincerity and untruth, if they could.

If, therefore, we have not been detected, or held up to the deserved infamy which awaits dishonesty and imposture, it is not owing to our opponents being ignorant of what we write, or being either unable or unwilling to defeat us, if it were possible to do so, by so summary a method as that of exposing, in any way, the conduct of our journal as discreditable to the character of its conductors.

Secondly, we would remind our readers that not one of the able Roman Catholic writers who have come forward, so earnestly, to defend the doctrines of their Church in our pages, have ever charged us with falsehood or fraud, while they have done their best to confute our arguments, and establish their own.

Thirdly, not a single Roman Catholic periodical has yet ventured to impeach a single statement we have made, or authority we have cited, though some of them have, in general terms, reiterated against us their wholesale charges of falsehood, calumny, and blasphemy, with all the virulence and foul-mouthed invective which the English language can supply.

One charge only has ever been made against our paper, which is at all of a tangible character, and that is, that its title is a false one, and calculated to deceive an unwary reader.

Upon this we would say a few words, and a very few will suffice for our complete justification—for, in our judgment, we think we could not have chosen a title more suitable.

As to its having misled a single reader, we boldly call on our opponents to point out a single number from the commencement of our labours, which could have left any reader in doubt whether the conductors of it were members or opponents of the Church of Rome. That we were dissentients from the Church of Rome, though candid and moderate opponents, ready to hear and discuss all that could be said in her favour, and anxious only to discover and lead others into truth, was apparent to all. The most bigoted monopolist of the title Catholic, never was or could have been led into misconception as to our real views and convictions.

We have, again and again, disproved the right of any denomination of Christians, however numerous, to arrogate to themselves *exclusively* the title of Catholic or Universal. We think the Greek Church, the Roman Church, the English Church, the Lutheran Church, are all branches (though some of them corrupt branches) of the one Catholic Church; but none of them alone, exclusively, has a just claim to arrogate to itself that venerable title; and it is because we would permanently record, in the most practical manner, our continued protest against the ill-founded claim of any *particular* Church to be the *whole* Church of Christ; that we deliberately selected a title which claims for ourselves, while it concedes to our Roman Catholic readers also, the title to which we think both entitled, of members of the *Catholic* Church of Christ. We ourselves claim, in the language of the Liturgy and prayers of the Church of England and Ireland, to be members of the "one Catholic and Apostolic Church," and we never will consent to waive that title, while we hold fast to the only ancient creeds and symbols of the primitive faith—creeds which we hold in common with all Catholics (Greek or Roman) throughout the world.

In the very first number of our paper, we defended our claim to the title when stating, explicitly, that there were several doctrines which all sincere Roman Catholics and Protestants hold in common, which might, with truth, be called Catholic (*i.e.*, universal) opinions, and demonstrated that our Roman Catholic brethren could not, consistently, deny the title of Catholic to any who are sincere believers in the Trinity, without setting at defiance both the voice of antiquity, and the language of one of the authorized formularies of both Churches—the Athanasian Creed—which is clear and explicit, where it says, in terms the most express, "This is the Catholic faith, that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity."

If the Roman Catholic priesthood of Ireland or England have any other charge to make against us, let them bring it forward manfully, in a fair spirit, and we shall rejoice to discuss the matter with them with Christian forbearance and candour; if they will not do so, but continue their present vain and inconsistent attempt to ignore our existence, while, at the very time, they are falsifying their own policy by denouncing us as liars, we shall be driven at last to retaliating on them by saying, in the words of the honest Capuchin friar, "*mentiris impudentissime*."

Correspondence.

IS THE DOCTRINE OF PURGATORY TAUGHT BY THE EARLY FATHERS?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.*

SIR—I find the subject of Purgatory revived in your April number, by a Mr. John Duffy (No. 28, p. 52). The question was raised in your journal, Vol. I, Nos. 6 and 7, when you published a letter of "A Catholic," who wished "to know, once for all, if it (Purgatory), was or was not the doctrine of the Church of Christ in the first ages." He limited his inquiry to the writers of the "first three centuries." Mr. W. C. Search undertook to supply the information required (see Vol. I, No. 7, p. 81): and among the alleged authorities he quoted Tertullian, as follows:—

"I. Among the apostolical traditions received from the Fathers, we have oblations for the dead on the anniversary day.—*De Corona Militis*, p. 209."

"II. In his treatise on Monogamy, cap. x., p. 155, he advises his wife, 'Pray for the soul of your departed husband, entreating repose to him, and participation in the first resurrection—making oblations for him on the anniversaries of his death.'"

In your observations on these two passages, you state that the doctrine of Purgatory is not proved by them, and, therefore, think it unnecessary to inquire whether they "do really allude to Purgatory or not." You seem to

* We have to apologize to the writer of the following valuable letter for so long delaying its insertion. The crowded state of our columns must plead our excuse.—Ed.

admit that Tertullian believed in Purgatory after he became a heretic; that he learned the doctrine from an acknowledged heretic, Montanus; and the books from which the passages in question are cited were both written *after* he became a heretic. Every candid inquirer after Catholic truth must admit this to be a sufficient reply to the citations of Mr. W. C. Search. Mr. John Duffy, however, recurring to this subject, again quotes one of the above passages from Tertullian, and again in his (Tertullian's) book, '*De Corona Militis*,' 'We make yearly oblations for the dead.' To Mr. Duffy's citation you observe—"Though this passage might be cited to prove the practice of prayer for the dead in Tertullian's time, it is obvious that it does not bear at all on the doctrine of Purgatory." But as Tertullian speaks of a *custom* then existing in the Church, among some Christians, I think the passages deserve a little further investigation and explanation than that given by you, particularly as more than one great principle is involved in them. From firmly-rooted prejudices and preconceived notions our Roman Catholic lay brethren are too apt to construe silence into a defeat. Your correspondents will still believe, and will re-quote, when opportunity offers, the passages in question as *proofs* that the modern Roman doctrines of Purgatory and praying for the dead *did exist in the third century*. Romanists appeal to these passages as proofs of an alleged historical fact; and you will permit me, therefore, to make a few additional observations as supplementary remarks to your answers.

It will be observed that Mr. Search quotes more fully than Mr. Duffy; I will, therefore, direct my observations to Mr. Search's citation; they will apply with equal force to Mr. Duffy's still more garbled extract.

I. I have to complain of two serious omissions from the first quotation, which very much affect the force and sense of the passage; and first, Mr. Search has omitted the words, "and not enforced by the positive words of Scripture," after the word "Fathers." He gives the page, without naming the edition from which he quotes. But if he consults, among other editions, Edit. Rothomagi, 1662, p. 289, he will find the missing passage. But as I will not accuse Mr. Search of intentional dishonesty, we must take for granted that he has quoted this passage from some Roman Catholic book of controversy. You, sir, have already shown him the danger of relying on such books for proofs, when he comes to measure swords with us, Protestants. (See No. 9, p. 107; No. 10, p. 119.) For their satisfaction, I would refer Mr. Search and Mr. Duffy to the handbook of Romanists—namely, "*The Faith of Catholics*," by Kirk and Berrington. They will find, in page 354, of the edition of 1813, and p. 356, edit. 1830, the passage in question thus translated:—

"Among the apostolical traditions received from the Fathers, and not enforced by the positive words of Scripture, he reckons oblations for the dead on the anniversary day."

The omission of these few words is very significant. Here is an admission, by the author quoted, that the custom in question is *not* enforced by Scripture. Tertullian reckons this among many other ceremonial usages (many of which are wholly relinquished by the Roman Church at the present day) as a matter of *discipline*, and not as a point of Christian faith. The book, "*De Corona Militis*," was written in defence of a Christian soldier, who declined to wear a crown or garland which his companions in arms wore as a direction from the emperor, and as an honour or mark of distinction, when the conduct of the Christian soldier was inquired into. The context of the passage is as follows:—

"It is easy forthwith to demand, where it is written, that we should not be crowned, but truly, where it is written that we should be crowned? for when the opposite party demands the authority of Scripture for our opinion, they, in fact, predetermine that their own side ought to possess the authority of Scripture for theirs. For if it shall be said, that it is lawful to be crowned, because Scripture does not forbid it, with equal justice may it be retorted, that it is unlawful to be crowned, because Scripture does not enjoin it. How shall discipline act? Shall it receive both opinions, because neither is forbidden? or shall it reject both, because neither is commanded? But, it may be said, that which is not forbidden is freely permitted. Yea, rather, that is forbidden which is not freely permitted."

"And how long shall we thus spend our labour to no purpose, while there exists, on our side, immemorial observance, which, by anticipating the ground, has made the principal point in the case. If no Scripture has determined the matter, it is certainly confirmed by usage, which, without doubt, flowed from tradition. For how could anything be frequently practised, if it had not been previously handed down? But thou sayest, even in the holding out of tradition, written authority is to be demanded. Let us inquire, therefore, whether tradition, though unwritten, ought not to be received. We should not hesitate to adopt the negative of this question, were the matter not prejudged by examples of other observances, which we vindicate without any support from writing, by the authority of tradition alone, from thence by the protection of custom."

Tertullian then proceeds to enumerate some ceremonial usages of the Church, as not being taught or prescribed by Scripture, or Divine revelation, and among them "oblations for the dead, for their birth-days to heaven, on the anniversary day." Or, as Mr. Search gives it, oblations for the dead on the anniversary day; and Mr. Duffy—"We make yearly oblations for the dead." Tertullian then concludes with these words—"If for these, and other such like regulations, you demand the law of the SCRIPTURES, none can be found, (si legem exposcutes Scripturarum, nullam invenies). Tradition will be held up before you as originating, usage as confirming, and faith as practising them."

Now, it must be observed that Roman Catholics have also quoted this first passage in proof of the antiquity of Roman Catholic "masses." Modern Roman oblations for the dead, and masses for the dead, are almost inseparable; and it is now, also, produced as proof, that the doctrine of Purgatory was believed in the 3rd century. I ask Mr. Search and other Romanists, lay and clerical, whether they are ready to stand by the testimony of Tertullian—namely, that there is no warranty in Scripture for their doctrines of Purgatory and masses, and prayers for the dead? I do not think they will dare to make so wide an admission; and if not, they must entirely renounce the testimony of Tertullian. It may not be amiss to notice, that when Tertullian is talking of a matter of faith, as necessary to be believed, he uses a very different strain; here he makes a direct appeal to SCRIPTURE, and rejects all other authority. He "adores the fullness of Scripture." "Whether all things were made of any subject matter, I have as yet read nowhere. Let those of Hermogenes' shop show that it is written; if it be not written, let them fear that woe which is allotted to such as add or take away." We now can appreciate the value of the omission of the words which refer to the Scriptures in the first part of the quotation.

With this second rebuke Mr. Search will be a little more careful before he quotes, second hand, from books of which personally he seems to know nothing, and I trust Mr. Duffy also will profit by the lesson.

II. I now come to the second part of the first passage quoted.

I cannot discover from whence Mr. Duffy borrows; but Mr. Search adopts the translation given by Kirk and Berrington—"We have oblations for the dead on the anniversary day." I now accuse Mr. Search of another serious omission. I have given above the proper translation—"We make oblations for their birth-days to heaven on the anniversary days." The original passage is—"Oblationes pro defunctis, pro natalitiis, annua die facimus."

To understand the meaning of this passage, a few words of explanation will be necessary. I hope to make it clear, that the oblation referred to was not the modern sacrifice of the mass, nor was it offered for souls in Purgatory. Martyrdom, among the early Christians was considered a passport to heaven. The persecutors, we read in Eusebius' history, endeavoured to destroy all traces even of their dead bodies, to prevent the survivors giving them burial; but what could be saved were honourably interred by the Christians, who, adopting the old Greek custom, celebrated their memory about their tombs, to encourage the survivors to fortitude and perseverance. We then read of the anniversary festivals, or commemorations of the day on which martyrs suffered, called the days of Nativity, as they were on that day born to a new life. By reason of the great persecutions these meetings became very frequent. At these assemblies prayers were offered up and thanksgivings that the martyrs had gained a victory, their names were rehearsed, the eucharist celebrated, almsgivings, which were afterwards called oblations, were then made to the poor. These alms were made in fruits, corn, wine, &c. That these oblations were *dones* or *gifts* only is evident from the explanation given in the canons of the councils of Carthage and Vaison.† A simple narrative is given in the Epist. Smyrn.—"We can never abandon Christ nor serve another; we adore Christ as the Son of God, and we cherish the martyrs as the disciples and followers of our Lord; we solemnize the day of their nativity, which is the day of their death, in remembrance of such as have conflicted for the truth, and in order to the exercising and exciting others to imitate their example. We hope to be made capable of the like graces, and, at last, copartners and fellow-sharers in the same glory." There is also a very remarkable passage in one of the books attributed to Origen—"Let us observe, O friends, what a change has taken place in men. For the ancients (Greeks) celebrated the natal day, loving one life, and not hoping another after this. But now we do not celebrate the natal day, because it is a beginning of gifts and temptations; but we celebrate the day of death, inasmuch as it is a laying aside of all gifts, and an escape from all temptations. We celebrate the day of death, because those die not who seem to

die. Wherefore, we both observe the memorials of the saints, and devoutly keep the remembrance of our parents and friends which die in the faith; as well rejoicing for their refreshing [which cannot be in Purgatory] as requesting also for ourselves a goodly communion in the faith. Thus, therefore, we do not celebrate the day of birth; because they which die shall live for ever, and we celebrate it, calling together the religious persons with the priests, the faithful with the clergy; inviting, moreover, the needy and the poor, feeding the orphans and widows, that our festivity may be for a MEMORIAL OF REST to the souls departed (ut fiat festivitas nostra in memoriam requiei defunctis animabus, quorum memoriam celebramus) whose memory we celebrate, and to us may become a sweet savour in the sight of the eternal God."

That these commemorations and oblations were offered for, or in memory of martyrs, then actually enjoying eternal happiness, is evident from the writings of Cyprian, who professed himself to be a pupil of Tertullian, and a great admirer of his writings.†

Referring to certain martyrs, Cyprian says—"Finally, also, take note of the days on which they depart from life, that we may be able to celebrate their commemoration among the anniversaries of the martyrs: although Tertullus, our most faithful and most beloved brother, according to the usual anxiety and care which he shows to the brethren in every kindness and labour of love . . . has written, and does write, and signify to me the days on which in prison, OUR HAPPY BRETHREN, by issue of a glorious death, PASS TO IMMORTALITY; and oblations and sacrifices are here celebrated by us, on account of their commemorations, which we shall speedily hold in company with you, the Lord being our protector." (§)

In the 37th Ep., p. 73 (edit. as before), he says—"Sufficiently blessed are those of you, who, journeying by these footsteps of glory, have already departed from life; and the path of virtue and faith having been completed, have arrived at THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD (ad complexum et osculum Domini), the Lord himself rejoicing."

Ep. xi. p. 23.—"Torments which do not readily dismiss to a crown, but torture until they overthrow; unless that some one, rescued by the Divine majesty, should expire amidst the very torments, having obtained glory, not by termination of punishment, but by the quickness of dying." Again, in the 31st Ep. p. 62, he talks of others dying "confessing Christ." "The world having been abandoned, to have sought heaven—men having left to stand among angels—and all secular hindrances having been burst asunder, now to be placed, liberated, in the presence of God, to hold fast WITHOUT ANY DELAY a heavenly kingdom."

From passages such as these, which might be multiplied, we can at once comprehend the meaning of Tertullian's words, when he speaks of oblations for the dead, on these anniversary days of commemoration.

According to the modern Roman doctrine, all the faithful—all those who die in the faith of Christ—go to Purgatory, before they can be in a fit condition to appear before God; and the Trent Catechism distinctly asserts this imaginary receptacle to be a place of suffering, and which Bellarmine, and a host of writers, describe to be of a most horrible nature. This modern Purgatory, therefore, could not be the place where the martyrs, &c., named by Tertullian and Cyprian, and others, were consigned, when they offered up their "oblations" on the anniversary days of their death, as they evidently believed them to be in happiness. Cyprian even expressly states them to be in the presence of their Lord.

The second part of this first quotation in question I have translated—"We make oblation for the dead, for their birth-day to heaven, on the anniversary day." Mr. Search has omitted to translate the word "pro natalitiis," which omission destroys the true sense of the phrase, "oblationes pro defunctis, pro natalitiis, annua die facimus." In adopting the translation of *natalitiis*, "for their birth-day to heaven," I only follow authorities of his own church. De la Cerda, the Jesuit, on this passage, says—"By *natalitia* Tertullian means the days on which Saints, dead to the world, are born to heaven."§ And another Roman Catholic, Priorius, says—"By *natalitia* Tertullian means the solemnities accustomed to be held in honour of martyrs, on the day on which, being dead to the world, they were born to heaven. From whence we make oblations on the annual day—that is, yearly."||

The omission of the word *natalitia* (if intentional) is most obvious; for its appearance in the proper place clears the passage of all difficulties. Thus, then, we now come to the truth—first, that the ceremony spoken of is not warranted by Scripture, which we discover not from Mr. Search's version of it, but by consulting

the original text; and, secondly, that the ceremony itself had no reference whatever to the doctrine of Purgatory, the truth of which also becomes apparent by the substitution of a word also omitted or suppressed by Mr. Search, as also by Mr. Duffy.

III. I observe that the word "apostolical" prefixed to "tradition," is a gratuitous addition made by Mr. Search or his adviser. The word does not appear in the original, and is unwarrantably foisted in, for very obvious reasons.

Thus, then, in the quotation of two lines and a half, we have two serious omissions and one interpolation, all apparently intentional, and inconsistent with that accuracy and good faith which should be scrupulously observed in religious controversies.

With your permission I will take the second quotation another time.*

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

C. H. COLLETTE.

London, 2nd May, 1854.

ON INFALLIBILITY.

We have received a long communication from our respected correspondent, Mr. Rourke. He finds it hard when his pen is set going to get it to stop; however, he has kindly divided his communication into three portions, each of reasonable length. We strongly recommend his example, in this respect, for imitation by our other correspondents. We can often find room for a short letter, when a long one is obliged to stand over, month after month, from the mechanical difficulty of making room for it without displacing other more pressing matter. And a correspondent, thus dividing his letter, will not injure his chance of seeing both parts appear in the same number, should the state of our columns admit it.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—Accept my sincere thanks for your kindness in inserting my long letters, on the infallibility of the Church of Christ, in your widely-circulated journal. I beg leave to send you another letter on the same interesting subject; but it will be a short one, as I will not, for the future, "disregard your request to be brief." I most earnestly and affectionately call the attention of your truth-seeking readers to the following passages from the Sacred Volume, which invincibly and irrefragably prove the infallibility of Christ's Church. But, before I open the Holy Book, will you permit me to say that I did not, in my last letter, charge you with wilful blindness, as you declare. My meaning was that, as the Jews reading the Old Testament, by reason of their blindness, cannot see Christ in the Scriptures, but shall, when they believe in him, and have the cover removed, perceive all to be most plainly done, and spoken of him in their law and Scriptures; even so the opponents of the Church of Christ, having a far greater cover of blindness and incredulity over their hearts, in respect of the Catholic Church, which they impugn, than the Jews have concerning Christ, cannot see, though they read, or hear the Scriptures read, ever so much, the marvellous evidence of the Catholic Church and truth in all points; but when they shall return again to the obedience of the same Church, they shall find the Scriptures most clear for her and her doctrines, and shall wonder at their former blindness.

Here follow the passages above alluded to:—"For this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee (the Church), nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near thee. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn. This is the inheritance of the servants of the Lord, and their justice with me, saith the Lord."—Is. liv. 9, 10, 13, 14, 17.

Our Lord again says—"I, the Lord, do keep it (the Church), I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day."—Isai. xxvii. 8. These are passages, sir, which, as I have said in the preface, irrefragably prove the infallibility of the Church of Christ. How, you must tell your readers, can she err if the Lord cannot be angry with her, if she is founded in righteousness, if her children are taught of the Lord, if his covenant cannot be removed from her, and if he keeps and waters her continually with heavenly truth?

Again, St. Paul says—"Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed."—Gal. i. 8. Now, I ask, whether the Apostle did not here claim an infallibility in what he had preached? whether in these words he allowed the Galatians to believe that he had been under a mistake? or whether it be not plain that he demanded an entire submission to the doctrine he had taught them? and how far, then, was St. Paul from encouraging the private judgment of any man to

* Your correspondents may now consult "Pope's Roman Misquotations," which will enlighten them further on the subject. London, 1840.

* Orig. Oper. Studio Erasmi, Basil, 1536, tom. I. p. 500, ex off. Froben.—Lib. iii., comment. in Job.)

† See Jerome, vol. iv., pt. ii. p. 115, edit. 1684.

‡ Ep. xii., edit. Oxon. 1882, p. 27. Tom. ii.

§ Tertullianus intelligit per natalitia dies, quibus sancti, mundo mortui nascuntur celo. De la Cerda e sc. Jesu; in loc. Tert. Op. Paris, 1624, p. 657.

|| Prior, in Loc. Tert. Oper. Rig. et Prior. Annotat. adject. Lutet. 1684, p. 102.

* Adoro Scripturæ plenitudinem.—Tert. Adv. Hermog., cap. 22, edit. Euthom. 1662, p. 417. "An autem de aliquâ subjuncti materiâ facta sint omnia, nusquam adhuc legi. Scriptum esse docent Hermogenis officina. Si non est Scriptum, timeat vel illud adjicientibus aut detrahentibus destinatum."—Ibid., ibid. See Ed. Paris, 1634, p. 217. † See Scultet. Med. Theol. Patrum. Amb. 1603, p. 307.